

HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.—CXXXIX.

How Harry Succeeds With Poultry.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

Have your hens laid any high-priced eggs?

Eggs have been selling a little higher every year for three years, and only a few farmers have gotten the benefit of the high prices. It is so easy to make them lay when properly fed and managed. Mary Jane reports a fair supply from our own farm. And yet we do not spend more than six hours a month in looking after them. And our farm is not an ideal place for poultry, by any means.

There are certain little details that must be attended to in order to get the best results. Every farmer feeds his chickens more or less, principally on corn; so do we, but not very heavily. When the weather is very cold the feed of corn should be increased. It is best to give the hens all they will eat up clean at night. If there is a snow or very heavy frost on the ground a feed of mash made of corn meal or wheat shorts with a pod of red pepper for an average of 3 or 4 hens in the flock, fed warm, will greatly benefit the hens.

Then they should have some small grain fed in the sheaves hung up so that it will be necessary for them to jump up to get the grain. When there is none of this to be had, the grain can be scattered among leaves and straw. What you want by this plan is to make the hens exercise. When you feed corn alone and the hens sit under the houses and have purple combs you are sure to have no eggs.

We should have said that corn can be substituted for the small grain to a limited extent by feeding it without shucking, thus forcing them to scratch in order to get the grain. The following small grains have been used successfully by us: rice, oats and wheat. Rice seems to be best, but on account of the great number of insects produced by this grain, we were forced to abandon it years ago, and now depend entirely on oats.

Bones and blood from hogs and other animals killed on the farm should be fed to the hens instead of letting the dogs eat them. It is light work to break the bones up in small pieces so that they can be swallowed easily. Nearly every farmer has chicken or other fresh meats for his Sunday's dinner through the winter, so that a continuous supply of bone can be had. It is only necessary to feed bones during cold weather, as the hens can supply this want with insects during warm weather.

There is another matter we wish to emphasize, and that is a good warm house for them to sleep in. We can do no better than to describe the one we use. It is made tight on the north, west and one-half of the east side, so that no cold drafts can affect the hens. The roof is made so that no water can leak through, thus protecting the hens and manure too. The roosts poles are different heights, from 18 inches to 3 feet. We prefer this plan, as some chickens like high and some low roost poles. The poles are made of 2-inch sawed slats.

We prefer the Leghorn and Plymouth Rocks, as they give us most eggs through the year. If you want the pullets to lay early they should be hatched the last of February or March. Some of the above ideas have been printed before, but as new subscribers are added yearly many of the ideas will be helpful to them.

This subject will be considered further next week.

HARRY FARMER.

Charlotte Chronicle: "There is more profit in raising turkeys than cotton," said a Charlotte lady to-day. "I know a woman in the country who raised fifty turkeys last year which yielded her a profit of \$80. Now she couldn't possibly have made so much by expending the same time and labor on cotton."

Farm Notes from the East.

Editor Progressive Farmer:

While the ground is solidly frozen, the hogs killed, the wood-pile replenished and stock all sheltered, the best thing the farmers can do is to sit by the fire and read his church paper and The Progressive Farmer.

The latter is starting off the new year with facts for the farmer that if studied cannot fail to make him a better man and a better farmer.

Our State Chemist has started off with some important points on composting, with more to follow.

I am anxious to see more mixing of material on the farm, and less manipulated guanos. I have not used for many years any guano only such as I mixed on the farm, and I can assure any farmer that he can save from one to five dollars a ton by getting the material and mixing at home. I notice in Dr. Kilgore's article this week that he recommends "kainit" as the source of potash. I have used muriate of potash as a matter of economy, and think it serves the purpose better and saves the hauling of two tons in three, as muriate potash contains more than three times as much potash to the ton. Will Professor Kilgore please tell us if there is any objection to using muriate potash rather than kainit for our general crops, such as cotton, corn, potatoes, peas, etc.?

With cottonseed meal on the farm, and by buying phosphoric acid and potash in some form, any farmer can mix a fertilizer that will insure good crops, if properly applied. I formerly mixed the chemicals in compost, but find from experience that it is better to put the manure from stables, lots, etc., on the ground alone, and then put the guano in the drill. I find this gives best results, and I have been trying experiments on the farm nearly fifty years, and I think I am learning more each year now than at any former period; and the older I get, the better I enjoy farm life—not for the money in it, but for the satisfaction chiefly. I regard a well-arranged farm, with a real home on it, the best place on earth to build character, and when we come to the real business of life, character-building is first and most important. It matters little what a man's occupation is, his purpose in life should be to build a character—that is, to be a co-worker with "Christ, the great example."

Brother farmers, with our improved agricultural papers, our longer school terms, our rural libraries, our improved implements for work, all these combined, put us in reach of all that is good in life. Let us reach out and make 1904 the very best year of our lives.

D. L.

Craven Co., N. C.

An Important Tobacco Bill in Congress.

To the Farmers, Producers and Consumers of Tobacco in North Carolina and Adjoining States:

I have offered the following bill (H. R. 3574) in Congress:

"A bill for the relief of the farmers and tobacco growers of the United States.

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that farmers and growers of tobacco shall hereafter have the right to sell tobacco in the raw or unadulterated, of their own growth, in any quantity, either in the leaf, twist, or such other form as they may wish, free from any tax or charge, or being in any manner subject to any statutory regulation on the part of the Government of the United States. All statutes in conflict herewith are hereby repealed."

Its passage will prevent the arbitrary fixing of the price of raw leaf, or the manufactured product. It will be an equitable, automatic governor of prices, protecting both producer and consumer, and working no injury to the manufacturer, who is satisfied with a legitimate profit on his capital.

This bill has been endorsed by the White Burley Tobacco Growers' Association of Kentucky, the only organization of tobacco growers in the United States. Every member of the Kentucky delegation in Congress is enthusiastically supporting it, but there is no influence so potent before Congress as a direct petition from the people. I want one hundred thousand citizens to petition Congress through their members, urging the passage of this bill. Blank petitions will be furnished upon application. Your hearty co-operation is most earnestly desired.

Very respectfully,

SOUTH TRIMBLE,

Seventh Kentucky District.

The Round-Headed Apple Tree Borer.

State Entomologist Franklin Sherman has just issued a special circular on the round-headed apple-tree borer. "This pest," says Mr. Sherman, "does considerable damage to young apple trees in the western part of North Carolina, but is not, so far as we know, destructive in the eastern section. Our records show that it is destructive in Stokes, Wilkes, Watauga, Buncombe, Haywood, Macon and Jackson Counties. This circular, therefore, will be of special use to the apple growers in the western region, and those who are located in the eastern half of the State will need to give but slight attention to it, except that it might be of interest for growers all through the piedmont section to make an inspection to see if the insect is destructive in their orchards. In this way we may get exact information upon the distribution of the insect in this State. If any one observes this insect anywhere to the east of Rockingham and Catawba Counties, we shall be glad to have it reported to us, together with specimens, to show the absolute accuracy of the observation."

Copies of this bulletin may be had free of charge on application to Franklin Sherman, Jr., Entomologist, Raleigh, N. C.

Composting.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

I have been acquainted with The Progressive Farmer for twelve or fifteen years, and during this time it has improved from time to time. It seems now that the recent change will prove the greatest improvement yet. I see in last week's paper the subject of compost, and composting is treated, and several formulas are given—something I had been looking for for sometime. We lay farmers should know what elements to add to our barn-yard manure to make it a perfect fertilizer. My experience has been that it needs something to make it complete, and that chemicals properly mixed with such manure pays a larger per cent than any other way I have ever used it. We should experiment with these different formulas, and thus learn which suits our own farm best. Last spring a formula appeared in The Progressive Farmer, a special for sweet potatoes. I used it on my crop and was well pleased with the result. Planted for two hundred bushels, dug over three hundred, and the quality was fine. We should raise more stock, do more composting and buy less high-grade fertilizer.

P. H. MASSEY.

Durham Co., N. C.

Winston Tobacco Journal: Not in years have growers been forced to wait so long for a favorable period for hauling their tobacco as this season. Great inconvenience has been experienced as a result. Owing to growers not being able to strip and handle their tobacco, little buying has been done. Many of the warehouses on the new markets will be forced to continue operations until late next spring. The people who usually secure work in the warehouses during the fall and the winter have been forced in many cases to secure other work. As soon as the crop can be handled, buying will start with a rush.